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Minister of State
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D/MIN(DP)/AC/14/42

→ 1652 P.m.
Answers → Sec 6
A.C. (1)

8 June 1990

Jean J. J.

IRAQ: OUTSTANDING EXPORT LICENCE APPLICATIONS FOR
MACHINE TOOLS

Thank you for inviting me to comment on your letter of 5 June to William Waldegrave about the outstanding export licence applications from Matrix Churchill and Bridgeport Machines Limited to export machine tools to Iraq.

I intended to intervene in response to William's letter of 30 May by proposing that we should take every opportunity to look again at this matter, if possible sooner than the moratorium period he suggested. I believe, however, that you have made an important new point about COCOM relaxation of controls on machine tools. Although your optimism may be somewhat precocious, COCOM partners are discussing the matter this week and are expected to reach agreement. Machine tools are, however, regarded by at least two nations as part of a package (with computers and telecommunications equipment) which is yet to be agreed as a whole.

Nevertheless, if COCOM partners do indeed agree this relaxation, it would be impossible convincingly to justify the retention of the controls for purely national reasons in respect of Iraq, bearing in mind that many other uncontrolled Matrix Churchill machine tools have already been exported there. The solution would appear to be a simple notification to the companies once you publish the amendment to the Control Order giving effect to the COCOM relaxation, that an export order is no longer required.

A copy of this letter goes to William Waldegrave.

2 *[Signature]*
ALAN CLARK

The Rt Hon Lord Trefgarne

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